Read 1-9-67
My Grand Mothers

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This is to the

CLERGY

Who are the Men that goes about to settle

RELIGION

(As they say) according to the

Church of England.

Whether they may be

BISHOPS or *PRESBYTERS*,

or what Name soever they may go under.

I Am moved of the Lord God to give you a *Warning* from him in love to all your souls, that you may not bring upon your selves the guilt of innocent blood, and that you may be ware and cautious concerning this thing, which is of great and high Concernment, lest you do intrench upon the Right and Prerogative of *CHRIST JESUS*, who is the Head of his Church, which is his Body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all, far above all Principalities and Powers, Might and Dominion, & every Name that is named, not only in this World, but also in that which is to come, *who hath led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men, some* Apostles, *some* Prophets, *some* Evangelists, *and some* Pastors *and* Teachers, *for the perfecting of the* Saints, *for the work of the* Ministry, *for the edifying of the Body of Christ*; that was the *End* and *Work* that they had to do, who had received gifts from God for the Work of the Ministry: Now

Eph. 1. 21, 22.

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if you have this Authority from *CHRIST*, who is the Head of the Body, his Church, & have received Commission from him, and the gifts which he gives for this Work, then you would be tender over his Saints and Lambs which he hath gathered into his Fold in this his Day, by the Miniſtration of his Spirit which he hath given unto every one to profit withall; and no man by the Spirit of God calleth Jeſus accurſed: Now prove your ſelvs, & let your practice prove you, whether you have your derivation from this Root and Rock on which the whole Church is built, which Rock is *CHRIST*, who gives diverſities of Gifts by the ſame Spirit, for to one is given by the Spirit, *the Word of Wiſdom*, to another *the word of knowledge* by the ſame Spirit, to another *Faith* by the ſame Spirit, to another *the gift of healing* by the ſame Spirit, to another *the working of Miracles*, to another *Propheſie*, to another *diſcerning of Spirit*, to another *divers kinds of Tongues*, and to another the *Interpretation of Tongues*; but all theſe worketh *that one*, and the ſelf-*ſame ſpirit*.

Now if you drink of this Spirit, and be baptized into this body, which you profeſs to ſucced from, then will you be tender, and be careful of thoſe that have received theſe gifts of his Spirit, which may be ſeveral and various, which Spirit cannot be limited, becauſe it proceeds from the Lord of Heaven and Earth; and though there may be differences of Adminiſtrations, *yet the ſame Lord*; and though there may be diverſities of operations, *it is the ſame God, that worketh all in all*: And this is he that cannot be limited, who hath created Heaven and Earth, and rules and orders all things by the Word of his Power, who will make all ſubject unto him and will make all his people willing in this day of his Power, to be obedient unto him, who is coming to rule in the hearts and conſciences of men; and there is he eſtabliſhing his Throne, which is for ever and ever, and his Scepter there he will ſway, which is a righteous Scepter, and the Nations will he rule with a Rod of Iron, & break to pieces all his Enemies like a *Potters* Veſſel.

1 Cor. 12.

Now it is very like that you, or at leaſt many of you cannot believe that he is thus come, and coming; and therefore you may take the more boldneſs and liberty to act againſt him & his Power, becauſe you will not ſee nor believe that this is he; now that you may not be ignorant when Chriſt appears againſt thoſe his Enemies that would not that he ſhould reign,

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am I moved to warn you, before you proceed and go on in acting against the Lord God, that you may not be ignorant in this thing.

Consider, *Paul* (who once was called *Saul*) how zealous he was in persecuting of the Saints, and he had great reason; in that he was a *Jew outward*, and touching the Law, a *Pharisee*, and concerning the Law *blameless*; yet in the blindness of his zeal and ignorance, breathed he out threatnings against the *Saints*, which afterwards was his sorrow. Now sit down solemnly, and consider seriously, that God is a Spirit, and his Worship is in the Spirit, and he hath promised the pouring forth of his Spirit, and this cannot be limited to Time, nor Place, nor Person; for it is not men that ye have to deal with in this thing, but the Lord; this is the Stone that all the Builders ever set at nought, and did disallow, which now is become the Head of the Corner, which indeed is the Lord's doing, and its marvelous in our eyes.

Now if a man desires the Office of a *Bishop*, he desires a good Work, and not a great Name only; but he desires that the good Work of God may go on, and not to stop it: But a *Bishop must be blameless, the Husband of one Wife, valiant, sober, and of a good behaviour, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker, not* greedy *of filthy lucre, but patient, not a brawler, nor covetous, one that ruleth well his own House; for if a man know not how to rule his own House, how shall he take care of the Church of God: For a Bishop must be blameless as the Steward of God, not self-willed, nor soon angry, but a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, and temperate.* 1 Tim. 3. Tit. 1. 6. These are the Qualifications and Marks of them that should be Overseers of the *Church* of *God*. And likewise *Deacons must be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not given to filthy Lucre, holding the Mystery of Faith in a pure Conscience: Let these also, first be proved*, saith the Apostle. And so those that desires or looks after, or takes upon them these Offices of being *Bishops* and *Deacons*, and to be *Overseers* of the Church of God, they ought to be proved and tryed before-hand, whether they are men fearing God, and hating Covetousness, bringing forth fruits of the Spirit, not men of corrupt minds, not reprobate concerning the Faith, but holding the Mystery of Faith in a pure Conscience, void of offence, and were to give no offence, neither to the *Jew*, nor *Gentile*, nor to the Church of God; Such were

these, from whom the men of our Age would seem to derive their Pedigree; but if they be searched thorowly, they will appear to be of a later standing, & to be Branches which springs from another Root, which indeed is the *Pope*, from whence they had their Rise and Beginning, as might be clearly evidenced and demonstrated, if it be desired: Now it will be good and safe that these men do stand upon their own Foundation and Ground, and not to stretch themselves beyond their measure, nor to limit the Spirit of God, which limits all things, and searches all things, even the deep things of God: The *Apostle* said, Them that measure themselves by themselves, and compared themselves amongst themselves, were not wise; and said, They would not boast themselves without their measure, but according to the measure of the Rule which God had given them; Not boasting themselves without their measure, that is, of other mens labours, but his glorying was in the Lord, and in the Hope he had in him, who commended himself to every man's Conscience in the sight of God: And so now, if you come to be approved and tried by that of God in every mans Conscience, then ye will not limit nor offend that in the conscience, if ye be made manifest to that of God in every mans conscience, in the sight of God, then will you not lay Burdens, Yoaks, and oppressions upon them, but fulfil the Royal Law, according to the Scriptures, which saith, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*: In this you will do well; but if you respect persons, you wil commit sin: For the Apostle saith, *God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in Faith, and Heirs of the Kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him; For God hath chosen the foolish things of the World to confound the Wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the World to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the World, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things that are not, to bring to nought the things that are, that no flesh might glory in his presence.*

2 Cor. 10. 12.

1 Cor. 27, 28.

So it will be for your peace and safety, not to be partial in your selves, and so become Judges with evil thoughts, and judge that to be evil which you know not to be evil; for they that did speak evil of the things that they knew not, the Apostle said, the *woe was unto them, for they went in the way of Cain and ran greedily after the error of Balaam*: And so keep you out

Jude 10. 11

of

of this Way, left the hand of the Lord ſtop you, and you periſh in the gain-ſaying of *Core*, as they did. And be not Judges of other mens Conſciences, nor take not upon you to uſurp Authority over the Conſciences of men, for that is Chriſt's Prerogative, and the place of his Throne; *For there is one Law-giver, who is able both to ſave, and to deſtroy*: So your ſafeſt way will be to leave people to this of God in their conſcience, which they muſt ſtand or fall to, and none to judge another mans Servant, for to his own Maſter muſt he ſtand or fall: But thoſe that will have you to rule over them, and can receive your Doctrine, and own your Church-Government, and Church-fellowſhip, ſuch you may Rule over; for there is a neceſſity that thoſe that are not guided by that of God in their conſciences, there muſt be a Law for ſuch to Rule and Govern them, who are not ſubjected to that of God in them, but are Lawleſs: But truly I ſay unto you, it will be dangerous for you to ſtrive againſt the Power, and the Hand which is now ſtretched forth for the redeeming and recovering the Seed from under Bondage & Captivity, under which they have been long held. Oh remember what it was that *daſhed* you to pieces before! The ſame *Rock* is preſent ſtil, and changeth not; It was the *Preſſures*, and the *Burdens*, the *Yoaks* and *Bondages* that were impoſed upon Peoples conſciences, that was the cauſe that their ſpirits were raiſed and heightened, and therefore were they even reſolved to fight to the death, for the *LIBERTY* of their *CONSCIENCES*; this *LIBERTY* of *CONSCIENCE* is of great *weight*, & gives a great ſtroke in the minds of People; this you will find to be true: Look back and conſider what was impoſed formerly in the dayes of the *Biſhops*, what Spiritual *COURTS*, and ſpiritual *LAWYERS*, what *Sitations* and *EXCOMMUNICATIONS*, and limiting to *Pariſhes*, *&c.* Oh! ſuch grievous Burdens; as were even heavy to be born: Ye have ſuffered for thoſe things, and God did caſt you out, and diſpoſſeſs you of thoſe things, even by reaſon of thoſe ſad and heavy burdens which the people of theſe Nations ſuffered under, which formerly they could not bear: And now you will find it hard to bring them back into that Bondage again; and now you are in a hope of a poſſibility and likelihood of your being tried the *ſecond time*, but beware that you reſiſt not the Hand that hath ſmitten you, Jam. 4:12.

you, for it will be in vain for you to kick againſt the pricks; for the Work of the Lord muſt go on which he hath begun in this his Day, in which he is delivering & redeeming his Seed out of Bondage, and bringing back the Captivity of *Iſrael*, and the diſperſed of *Judah*; for he hath heard the cry of the oppreſſed Seed, and he hath felt its groanings, and ſeen its ſorrow, and heard its ſighings, and becauſe of the Innocent, he is engaged to plead with all fleſh; for the Deliverer is come to *Zion*, ſo *that* Jacob *ſhall rejoice, and* Iſrael *ſhall be glad*, and he that is the *SUPREME JUDGE* in the conſcience is ariſen, who purgeth the Conſcience from dead Works, to ſerve the living God; and the voice is heard which ſaith, *Ariſe you dead, and come to judgement*; and the time is come, and now is, that the dead do hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hears, do live; and he that is the Reſurrection and the Life is manifeſted, and he that believes on him, though he be dead, yet ſhall he live; and he that lives and believes, out of his belly flows Rivers of living Waters: And this Fountain and Current is ſet open, which all the Powers of Darkneſs cannot ſtop, which will fill the earth with the *knowledge* of the Lord, even *as the waters the ſea*: Therefore let all Hands be *ſtaid*, and all Mouths *ſtopt* that would act and ſpeak againſt this; for there is no Wiſdom, nor Underſtanding, nor Councel againſt the Lord: *I will ariſe* (*ſaith the Lord*) *of Hoſts, and cut off from* Babylon *the Name and Remnant, Son and Nephew*, (ſaith the Lord) *and I will make it a Poſſeſſion for the* Bittern, *and I will ſweep it with the Beſom of Deſtruction, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, who hath ſworn, ſaying, Surely as I have thought, ſo ſhall it come to paſſe, and as I have purpoſed, ſo ſhall it ſtand.* And this is the hand that is ſtretched out upon all Nations; ſo let all *fear* and *tremble* before him, who is a conſuming Fire to the Wicked, who is coming to render recompence to his Adverſaries, and Fury to his enemies; for the tranſgreſſions of the people are multiplied, and their Iniquities and ſins teſtifies to their faces; for they go on in tranſgreſſing and lying againſt the Lord, and they are departed from the Way of God, and are ſpeaking and uttering Words of falſhood, & Judgement is turned away backward, and Juſtice ſtandeth afar off; For Truth is fallen in the ſtreets, and Equity cannot enter; yea, Truth falleth, and he that departeth from Iniquity, maketh himſelf a prey, and the Lord hath

Pro. 21. 30
Iſa. 14.

hath seen it, and it hath displeased him that there is no true Judgement; therefore hath he put on Righteousness for a Brest-plate, and a Helmet of Salvation upon his Head, and he hath put on the Garments of Vengeance for Cloathing, and clad with Zeal as a Cloak; according to their deeds, accordingly will he repay; so shall they fear the Name of the Lord from the *West*, and his glory from the rising of the Sun; and the redeemed shall come to *Zion*, and unto them that turn from transgression in *Jacob*: So every one that feareth the Lord, and worketh righteousness, will be accepted of him, and no evil tydings can come to such; and the Lords people shall never be ashamed, though they may suffer much, and undergo many sad afflictions, yet if their suffering be not for evil doing, but for the Lord, and for conscience-sake, it will not be worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed; but it wil be good for you that are called *Ministers* and *Teachers*, that ye have not your hands in blood and persecution; for the blood of the Innocent wil cry aloud in the ears of the Lord; and when he looks & beholds that there is no Pleader in the Earth, then is he engaged to stand up, and to own that which no eye pitties, which breaths unto him alone, and cannot be satisfied without life and refreshment from him, who is now raising up *Pastors* after his own heart, which loves him, and feeds his Lambs and his Sheep, over which he is the Shepherd; and therefore they cannot want, but he feeds them with green Pastures, who is the Bishop of the soul, and those that rules over his flock, watches for the souls of people.

Therefore remember that you are warned in your life time to keep your hands from limiting of peoples Consciences, whose Appeal is onely unto the *Lord*, the *Souls Bishop*, and so cannot be limited by no man: Remember also, that there were Pastors that destroyed the Vinyard, and the Heritage was unto the Lord as a speckled Bird; and when they assembled, they were as Beasts of the Field that came to devour, and God's Tabernacle was spoyled, and their Pastors were become brutish, they sought not the Lord, and therefore they did not prosper, but their Flocks were scattered.

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Consider of this, and see what the Lord is doing, and do not wilfully shut your eyes against the Hand of the Lord, lest you fall into utter ruine and destruction; for he is the same to day, as he was yesterday and for ever; and as ye tender your own souls, and your eternal peace and comfort, be tender of tender Consciences, which the Lord hath made tender, and which are tender and dear unto him; and make not ye their hearts sad, which the Lord hath not made sad, which if you do, sad and heavy will be your misery; and if you should go about to limit and bind people to your wayes and worships, even upon pain of Firing, Prisoning, Banishing, yea if it be to Massacring and Martyring, you wil find that there is a people in this Nation that will give up their lives and their Blood for their Testimony which they hold, which is the testimony of Jesus, the Spirit of Prophesie, and that will follow the Lamb whersoever he goes; here is the patience of the Saints, they that keep the Commandments of God, and the Faith of Jesus, who shall overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and the Word of their Testimony, who loves not their lives unto death; And now remember that you cannot plead ignorance of this, nor that you are not forewarned that ye might avoid shedding innocent blood, which will be an everlasting Testimony for the Lord when he comes to make Inquisition for Blood, and when he comes to plead the cause of the Innocent, who have suffered innocently, and for *CONSCIENCE SAKE*, and not for any evil-doing: Then what will you answer him? Oh harden not your hearts while it is called to day, but cease to do evil, and learn to do well, that the Lord may have mercy on you, who delights in Mercy, and loves not the death of sinners, but rather that they should turn from their wickedness, and live.

M. F.

THE END.

LONDON, Printed for *Robert Wilson*, and are to be sold at his Shop at the sign of the *Black-Spread-Eagle* and *Wind-Mill*, in *Martins L' Grand*, 1660.